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U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management

**Wild Horse and Burro Program Research Update  
Riverton Advisory Board Meeting  
August 25, 2014**



# Summary of Presentation

- Population Growth Suppression Research
- USGS Studies
- Shade study
- Socio-economic studies

# Population Growth Suppression Research

- No highly effective, long lasting, and easily delivered fertility control methods available to control wild horse population growth.
- BLM is planning to initiate research studies aimed at developing or refining techniques and protocols for safe and effective contraceptives and spay/neuter procedures.

# Population Growth Suppression Research Request for Applications (RFA)

- Over twenty proposals were submitted requesting grant funding in response to an RFA seeking develop or refinement of PGS techniques and protocols.
- Initial TPEC review eliminated proposals deemed to be outside the scope of the RFA.
- NAS is currently reviewing proposals and will provide recommendations to BLM in December.
- Final TPEC review will evaluate proposals in light of NAS comments and recommend funding priorities in January.

# Population Growth Suppression Research

Some PGS trials that are under consideration along with the RFA proposals

- Geldings as component of breeding herd
- Surgical and chemical permanent methods



# USGS Studies – 2015

- Non-invasive genetic sampling (fecal DNA)
- Develop and test radio-collars
- Effects of wild horses on plant communities across a productivity gradient
- Carrying capacity modeling
- Population and economic model
- Sentinel population studies

# Shade Study

- Being conducted by UC Davis at PVC
- Evaluating the use of shade by compromised and healthy horses
- Study in progress, results expected by November, with report and manuscript to follow



# Socio-Economic Studies

- Assess knowledge, attitudes, preferences, and values regarding wild horse and burro populations and management
  - Research proposals under review
- Assess demand for wild horses and burros. Includes evaluation of the adoption program, sales program, long-term holding contracts, and eco-sanctuary providers
  - Solicitation closed Aug 20, 2014
- Analytic deliberation pilot project: Inclusive, collaborative stakeholder engagement
  - Beginning October 2014

# Questions???

